Cardinal Marx: Pope Leo XIV ‘stands in clear continuity with Pope Francis’

Cdl. Reinhard Marx, who recently made headlines for promoting same-sex ‘blessings,’ praised Leo XIV's first year, citing a commitment to peace and the poor ‘in continuity with Pope Francis.’

Pope Leo XIV Adri Salido/Getty Images

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(LifeSiteNews) — Cardinal Reinhard Marx has said that Pope Leo XIV “stands in clear continuity with Pope Francis” ahead of his one-year anniversary as pontiff.

To mark the papal election, the universal Church observes a “Pope’s Sunday” each year around the time of the election. Marx will celebrate Mass at Munich’s Liebfrauenkirche on Sunday, May 3, at 10 a.m.

On the occasion of the upcoming first anniversary of the election of Pope Leo, Marx reflected on the Pope’s time in office so far. Marx said on Thursday, “With this Mass, we want to give thanks for the pontificate of Pope Leo XIV and ask for God’s blessing on his ministry.” At the same time, the Mass will also serve to “commemorate the late Pope Francis and his blessed twelve-year tenure.”

"Without being a carbon copy of his predecessor, Pope Leo XIV nevertheless stands in clear continuity with Pope Francis, who always drew the world's attention to those pushed to the margins and worked tirelessly for peace and reconciliation. This witness is unforgettable!"

The German cardinal said, "During the first year of his pontificate, I always found Pope Leo XIV – even in our personal encounters – to be someone who seeks harmony and unity, who places his pontificate at the service of peace in the world, and who tirelessly reminds us, in clear words, of Christ's universal message of love, nonviolence, and mercy."

"Pope Leo has repeatedly spoken out clearly and audibly against war and terror and raised his voice for the poor and oppressed, who otherwise receive little advocacy," the archbishop of Munich and Freising continued. "For this, I am very grateful to him in these difficult times, when war is accepted or even deliberately employed by many powerful figures."

Marx, known as a leader of the heretical Synodal Way in Germany, recently caused controversy after implementing "blessing" guidelines in his diocese for couples "of all gender identities and sexual orientations."

Pope Leo responded to Marx's decision in an airplane interview. While he said that the German "blessings" document goes beyond what Pope Francis's declaration *Fiducia Supplicans* allows, he did seem to affirm the more "informal" blessings of same-sex couples as stipulated in Francis' document. Leo also appeared to downplay sexual sin, saying, "We tend to think that, when the Church is talking about morality, the only issue of morality is sexual. In reality, I believe there are much greater and more important [moral] issues, such as justice, equality of freedom for men and women, freedom of religion, that would all take priority before that particular issue."

Marx has not faced any official censure from the Vatican over the introduction of the the same-sex "blessings" guidelines.